BI-MONTHLY

▽THE MAGAZINE FOR BISEXUALS

BI-MONTHLY*AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 86*NO.15* 75P

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LONDON
BiSEXUAL
GROUP

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INFORMATION

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Is anyone interested in setting up a bisexual group in Glasgow? If so, please contact GBG, PH7, 340 West Princes St, Glasgow.

The Older Lesbian & Bisexual Women's Group is a non-scene group that meets for meals etc in London SW1. Telephone 01-979 0695 (6-8pm).

Is there anyone interested in setting up a Bisexual Group in the Sutton /Reigate area of Surrey? Contact Norman. BI 14:03.

I'm a bisexual man of 31 with a Christion outlook on life. I'd like to make some penfriends and contacts- women especially welcome. Staffordshire/ anywhere. BI 14:04.

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Anyone interested in forming bi-groups in the West Midlands area please write to Alan Taman, 14 Whyle Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B721 1ND.

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AD RATES

Commercial Ads are £1.00 for the first 5 lines(26 characters per line) and 25p per line thereafter.

'Achilles Heel'- an anti-sexist magazine produced by pro-feminist men. Details: 79 Pembroke Rd, London E17.

Red Stripe, the condom for safer sex. £1.25/6 from BMBI London WC1N 3XX.

M.A.N.- The Men's Anti-sexist Newsletter now available 80p or £4.20 for 6 from 60 Rhymney St, Cathays, Cardiff.

The Gay Bookclub offers over 50 titles a year at discount prices. Subscription £5p.a. from PO Box 247 London N15 6RW tel 800 5861.

Gay's The Word Bookshop is open 7 days a week at 66 Marchmont St London WC1

BISEXUAL GROUPS

BRITAIN

Edinburgh Bisexual Group meets Thursdays at Lesbian & Gay Community Centre, 58a Broughton St. Details: Kate 031-556 0497.

Contacts for bisexuals in Nalgo: tel. Zaidie 01-806 9264 Dorothy 01-853 4402 (evenings) or write to BM BI, London WC1N 3XX.

Tyneside Bisexual Group meets monthly in Newcastle. Details: Simon 0632-615088.

Sigma- support for relationships where one partner is gay or bisexual. Details: LLGS 01-837 7324.

Bisexuals & Married Gays Group. Details: Nigel 01-558 5203 (5.30-10pm).

London Bisexual Women's Group meets in people's houses. Details: Diana 01-675 6540 (before 10 pm).

Brighton Bisexual Group meets on the first Tuesday of every month 8pm at Brighton Unemployed Centre, Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton. Encl sae when writing for details.

SHOUT! A CAMPAIGN GROUP FOR LESBIANS, BISEXUALS AND GAY MEN.

This group was recently formed as a response to fears of growing homophobia in the Establishment (especially the media). It's main aim is active campaigning in defence of sexual minorities (rather than being a befriending or social group). Specific objectives include consciousness raising over such issues as work discrimination, oppression and harrassment; and promotion of a mutually supportive network of progressive social and political groups. The group has a special regional concern for Scotland and will be visibly active in Glasgow. Anyone intersted should contact SHOUT!, Box No.19, 240 West Princes Street, Glasgow.

The Radical Lesbian/Gay-Identified Bisexual Network: Pink Dandelion, The Basement, 69 Elm Grove, Brighton BN2 3ET.

The London Bisexual Group meets Mondays 8.30pm at the Fallen Angel,63 Graham St. London N1.Details; David 01-340-5729.

BI Sexual Women's Drop in Meeting recommencing September. 1st & 3rd Wednesday evenings of each month (contact Sarah from mid-August on 737-0895) at London Friend, 33a Seven Sisters' Road, London N7.

ABROAD

United States: Boston Bisexual Women's Network, PO Box 1534 Jamaica Plain,MA 02130. San Francisco Bisexual Centre 1757 Hayes St San Francisco CA 94117. Chicago Bi-ways PO BOX A333 Q Chicago ILL 6069 60690. University of Massachusetts Bisexual Group Amhurst MA 01002. Bisexual Support Group c/o Bill Himelhoch 4861 Broadway - Apt. 6-S New York, NY 10034 tel: 212/569-3636 The Bulletin Board P.O. Box 8556 New York, NY 10150

Netherlands: Landelijk Netwerk Biseksualiteit POBox 5087, NL-1007AB Amsterdam 020-732410

Netherlands: Bi-Club PO Box 797,2003RT Haarlem.

West Germany: Initiative Bisexueller Frauen & Manner c/o E.Kocher; Am Niddatal 31, D-6000 Frankfurt 90.

MISCELLANEOUS

Lesbian & Gay Youth Movement 01-317 9690.

Gay Legal Advice GLAD 01-821 7672 (Mo-Fri 7-10pm).

AIDS helpline- Terrence Higgins Trust 01-833 2971 (7-10 pm).

Lesbian Line 01-251 6911.

London Lesbian & Gay Switchboard 01-837 7324.

LEEDS West Yorkshire new AIDS helpline, Monday & Thursdays 7-9 pm (0532) 444209.

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THIS ISSUE

**Produced by: Tom Brooks (Editor), Philip Gatter (2nd Editor), Gill Tudor, Bill, Richard Harriman.
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NEWS MONITOR

GTW Victory

HM Cusoms has dropped all criminal charges against Gay's the Word bookshop. The nine directors faced 100 charges of importing 142 'obscene' books from the U.S.

'It's a total climb-down by Customs,' said Graham McKerrow of the shop's Defence Campaign. 'We have established that Lesbian and gay literature is to be treated equally and fairly upon import into this country'.

Many of the titles seized by Customs were published and freely available in this country.They included classic works by Jean-Paul Sartre and Jean Genet, sociological and historical works and even the text of TORCH SONG TRILOGY which has enjoyed a successful run on the West End stage

Customs officials have agreed that in future they will state in advance whether a book contravenes import regulations. They have sent back 19 of the 142 seized titles to the US and Gay's The Word can now challenge these rulings one by one in court without risking criminal charges.

"Don't donate"

'Don't give blood!'That's the message from the National Blood Transfusion service to all gay and bisexual men - even if their last sexual relationship happened years ago.

The message came after 40 blood donations in the last nine months were found to contain HIV(HTLV3) the virus which can cause AIDS.

Meanwhile the Transfusion Service has been criticised for refusing to accept the blood of a lesbian at a centre in Nottingham Lesbians are at least risk of contracting the virus.

Lesbian Strength

On Saturday June 21st 2,500 bisexual and lesbian women paraded through the London Streets on the biggest ever Lesbian Strength March.

Afterwards at the Lesbian and Gay Centre in Farringdon,East London, there were videos,discos and entertainment until 2AM. An alternative event took place at the Kingsway-Princeton College for those lesbians who do not consider the Centre to be their Centre.

Seventy per cent of the women on the March were under 25.'Where were the rest of you?' said one organiser.

New cafe

London's West End now has it's own Lesbian and Gay cafe.The FIRST OUT COFFEE SHOP is at 52 St. Giles High Street,WC 2 near Centrepoint (Tottenham Court Road Tube). The cafe is open from 11AM to midnight six days a week for cooffee,cake,salads,sandwiches, meals and snacks (Tel. 01-240-8042).

U.E.A. talk

On Wednesday October 29th at 7:30PM a woman member of the London Bisexual Group will be talking to the Lesbian Society of the University of East Anglia.

The event will be part of the University's Lesbian and Gay Awareness Week organised particularily for new students. But all women are welcome to attend.

N.Z. law passed

The New Zealand Parliament has at last passed legislation to decriminalize gay relationships between people over the age of 16.

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Bad policy

From July insurance companies started a policy of insisting on blood tests for anyone applying for a policy whom the insurers think may be at risk from the HIV (HTLV3) virus.

All policy application forms will also include the question; 'Have you recieved medical advice treatment or a blood test in connection with AIDS?'

The Terence Higgins Trust, Britain's main AIDS charity, has criticised the insurers saying that people who have antibodies to the virus are not necessarily going to develop AIDS. Current statistics show only one in ten becomes ill.

The Trust does not want to see a situation like in the U.S.A. where people who are antibody-positive have to pay up to 50 per cent more for insurance and health care.

Radio blackout

The Government has shelved plans for community radio stations. And lesbians and gay men are upset by the wasted work which would have led to seven hours of gay programmes every week.

Krish Sadhana of Lesbian Airwaves, a group of 25 women which has spent a year preparing programmes,said: 'All that work has gone down the chute.It was so important because this was the only way of getting lesbians on the air. There's nothing at all for us

Country weekend

The weekend holiday for bisexual women advertised in BI-MONTHLY 13 was a great success. Twelve women from around the country had a wonderful time walking singing,eating and talking in the North Yorkshire countryside. The venue was the Women's Holiday Centre at the Old Vicarage,Horton-in-Ribblesdale,near Settle

Group dynamics

The article about group dynamics in the last issue of BI-MONTHLY was written by AL HEAD, not Al Benson as stated. We wish to apologise for the mistake. The accompanying illustration was by Sall de Holt Elstub.

Threat from the Upper House

The positive presentation of homosexuality in sex education lessons in schools could be illegal when the new Education Bill is passed in Parliament.

A late amendment to the Bill says that ' such sex education as is given in schools shall have due regard to moral considerations and the promotion of stable family life'.

Gay Labour MP Chris Smith said that the amendment was so loosely worded that it would be difficult to prosecute teachers. ' It is absurd to draw the law into sex education', he said, ' and teachers would certainly be inhibited

' It ill behoves a government that has presided over the decline of Britain over the last seven years to start preaching to us about morality',he said. ' I find their attempts to propagate any one view of what might be regarded as ' morality ' frankly amazing '.

Introducing the amendment Viscount Buckmaster said, ' There is in this country a great deal of sex education which is amoral, if not downright immoral '. One of the themes of this education which he found most disturbing was that ' homosexual relations are just as acceptable as heterosexual relations'.

Speaking of the book ' Jenny lives with Eric and Martin ' Viscount Buckmaster said,'This pamphlet, which was reported in the Sun,had a full front page of two homosexual men naked in with the daughter of one of them between them. Can there be anything more repulsive than that ? '

No one in the House of Lords spoke against the amendment. 'There is widespread concern about the recent developments in the teaching of sex education ', said Baroness Cox, ' particularily under the rubric of so-called anti-sexism. Too often this is used to attack the concepts of family life and of heterosexuality '.

' I cannot imagine how on earth in this age of AIDS', she said, 'We can be contemplating promoting gay issues in the curriculum. I think it beggars description '.

Th EducationBill was intended to be an uncontentious move to spell out the powers of school governors and parents. But pressure from the Lords has led the Government to attach clauses abolishing corporal punishment, outlawing political bias and indoctrination and giving the police access to the classroom.

The excellent 'Womens Review' faces possible closure if it cannot attract a greater readership. Its articles, short stories and reviews are consistently articulate and well informed. An example from the July issue is a reflection on the publication of 'The Color Purple'. How should a small white publisher handle the work of a black woman writer? How could it relate to the Spielberg juggernaut? How would its structure change through releasing a runaway best-seller? Ros de Lanerolle concludes that The Women's Press has through 'The Color Purple' gained a stronger footing, and helped black and third world (and bisexual?) women's writing to find a place in world culture.

'Women's Review' is deserved of more attention, from men as well women!

New health study

A major study into bisexual people who have HIV (HTLV3),the virus which can cause AIDS,is to be launched at London's Middlesex Hospital. Doctors and health worrkers at seven major hospitals taking part in the study are anxious to find out how the virus is spread heterosexually.

'one in three of the homosexual men that we see here are AIDS carriers', said Professor Michael Adler of the Middlesex.

'About 10% of gays are also bisexual. That means a considerable number of men must therefore be passing on the virus to women today. However, we don't know who they are, or how many exist in this country. We must find that out as much as possible.'

Doctors have been seriously worried about the spread of the AIDS virus in Africa. In some countries up to 50% of the population are infected, and the spread is almost entirely heterosexual.

The money for the study will come from the Medical Research Council. Intravenous drug users and their sexual partners will also be included in the survey.

'We want to look at heterosexual transmission in different groups',Anne Johnson of the Middlesex told BI-MONTHLY.'When we know what the risk factors are,we will know what health advice to give to people.'

Big surveys of bisexual people in Miami and San Francisco have already shown the importance of condoms and spermicides in controlling the spread of the virus.

Anne Johnson denies that the Medical profession is concerned only because heterosexuals are now at risk from AIDS, with bisexual men possibly creating a bridge between gay men and the rest of the community.

'I think the term 'bridging group' is a terrible phrase',she said. 'AIDS is everybody s problem and we have to prevent people from suffering'.

(Anyone who would like to be part of the survey should contact Anne Johnson at the Middlesex Hospital).

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PRIDE '86

BY DAVID SMITH

Ten thousand lesbians, gay men and bisexuals marched through the streets of London on Saturday 5th July. And despite the miserable weather - the first real rain in the capital for three weeks - the festival in Kennington Park was a great success. Tom Robinson, Pete Shelley, Sandie Shaw and the Communards played to rapturous applause.

The parade started from Hyde Park and passed through Piccadilly, Trafalgar Square and Westminster. Bisexual men and women made their prescence felt with the 'London Bisexual Group' banner and another which proclaimed the carriers as 'Bisexual and Proud to be Lesbian and Gay'.

Liz Berryman of LBG who helped carry the banners waved to the watching crowds and felt that there was a lot of unexpected warmth from them. 'I wanted to be on the march for myself,' said Liz, 'and more important carry the banner for all those who could not have taken part. It's the one moment in the year when I can convey to everyone how pleased I am to be bisexual'.

A prominent placard carried by members of Humberside Friend and Gay Switchboard had a message for onlookers: 'Gay or Bisexual - Look! You're not alone!'

Geoff Dees, co-ordinator of the Hull-based befriending organisation told BI-MONTHLY that the placard had made quite an impression on the crowds watching the parade.

'Humberside Switchboard gets lots of calls from bisexual people,' said Geoff. 'Some are married, some not; but they all fit in really well at social events we organise. We wouldn't dream of making a distinction between gay and bisexual people. We are all fighting for the same cause.'

(Humberside Friend and Gay Switchboard can be contacted on Hull 443333 Monday evenings 8 - 10pm.)

One of the highlights of the march was the spontaneous applause from the demonstrators for the people mounting the 24-hour non-stop picket outside the South African Embassy in Trafalgar Square. Many marchers joined in the chorus of 'Burn it down! Burn it down! Burn it down!'

In Kennington Park members of the London Bisexual Group staffed a stall selling copies of BI-MONTHLY and badges and handing out leaflets about the meetings.

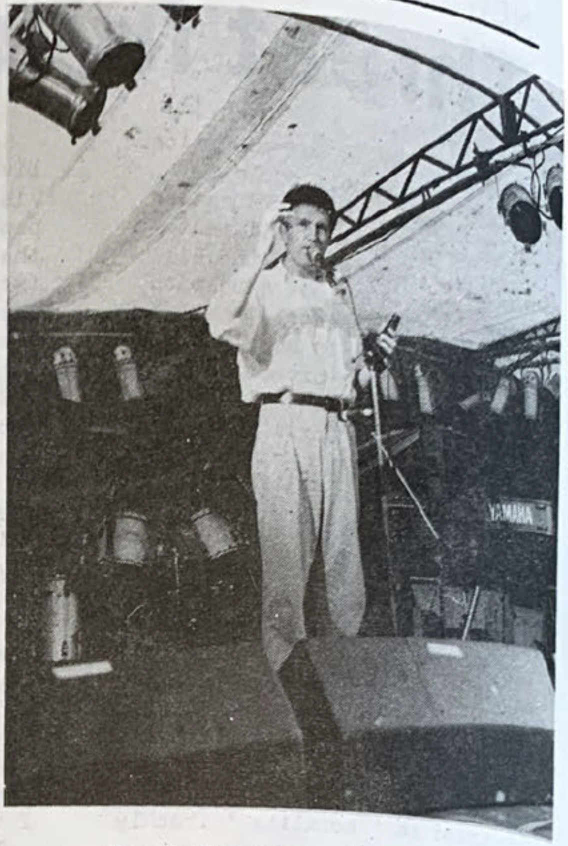
Meanwhile as the rain began to come down the crowd in front of the main stage was treated to speeches from local Lambeth councillors, the gay mayor of the north London Borough of Islington Bob Crossman and gay Labour MP, Chris Smith.

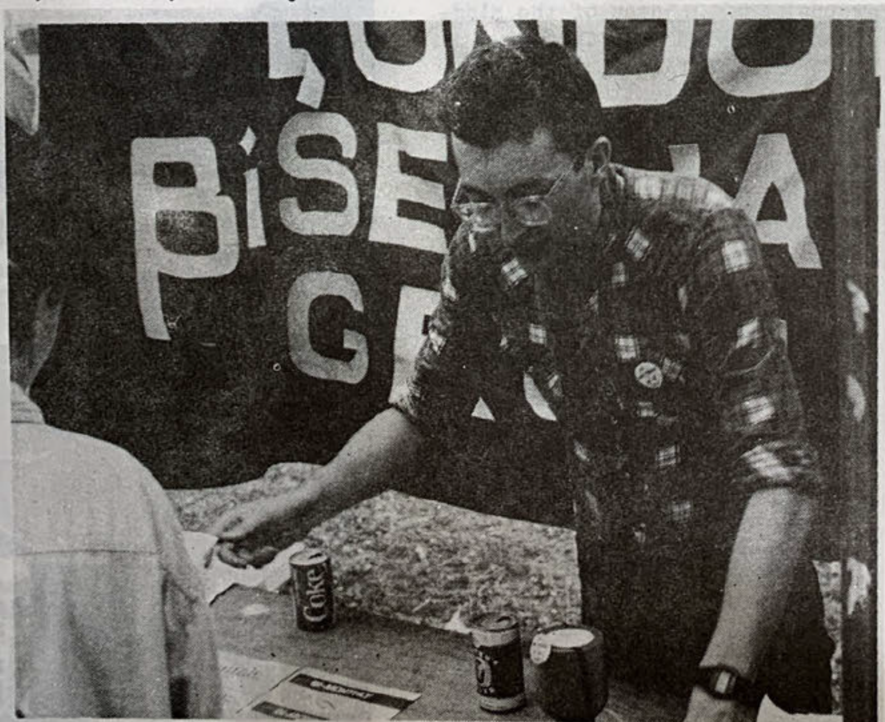
Bob Crossman who was once married (though you wouldn't have known from his recent interviews) looked resplendant with his chain of office draped over a blue Hawaian shirt. 'Only one in ten households in London is a nuclear family,' he said. 'We make up the majority of the rest.'

He demanded that the Labour leaders of the Inner London Education Authority recognise this and stop withdrawing gay books from schools just because The Sun doesn't like them.

Tom Robinson laughed and joked with the crowd and performed 'Glad to be Gay' and 'War Baby'; with his new single 'It ain't nothing like the real thing' - an anti-cocaine song - in a rapturously received set.

As he came off stage he told BI-MONTHLY that he reaffirmed his support for the involvement of bisexuals in the lesbian and gay movement. 'I am bisexual,' he said. 'How could I think otherwise? I would never presume to judge anyone for what they do in bed.'





Fresh from having a baby, 60s star Sandie Shaw is making a come-back. Fans screamed their delight at her mix of new and old material.

Signing autographs back-stage Sandie commented on the sometimes strained relationship between bisexuals and the gay movement. 'It is a sign of our humanity,' she said, 'how we react to someone with a different outlook on life from our own'.

As the clouds opened and the crowds dwindled Pete Shelley who recently came out as bisexual finished off the day's entertainment. An exhausted David Bunnett of the Pride Committee pronounced himself happy with the events but very disappointed by the weather. 'But next year there really must be more volunteers to help,' he said.

LONDON
BISEXUAL

Central Television are preparing a documentary and live discussion on AIDS, to be shown on 12th September. Bisexual people will appear in the documentary, and are needed for the discussion, which will be broadcast live on 12th September in the Nottingham studios. For details ring David Burkle on 01-340 5729.

BODY POSITIVE Facing the challenge of AIDS

Helpline

Every evening from 7·10. Answered by people who are themselves Antibody Positive. Call -

Terrence Higgins Trust	01 833 2971
London Friend	01 359 7371
Gay Switchboard	01 837 7324

and ask for the Body Positive number.

The rapid spread of the AIDS virus from gay to straight society in the USA shows there must be a huge unseen bisexual population. Also, the vagina is not proving to be such a good barrier to the virus as previously thought.

For the past nine months, Dr. Redfield of the Walter Reed Army Center has been screening all potential recruits for the AIDS virus. Tests have been carried out on 300,000 people in the 18 to 25 age group, 261,000 men and 42,000 women. Before the tests, it was expected that about 13 times more men than women would have positive results, but the survey found a figure of only 2.5.

Using these figures it is possible to estimate very approximately the ratio of bisexual men to gay men, and the probability of infection from men to women.

It would appear that there is a 40% chance of men and women exchanging the virus; and assuming the virus is equally distributed amongst gay and bisexual men, there seem to be four times as many bisexuals as gays.

So ironically the spread of the AIDS virus is proving there is a big bisexual population.

PLEASE
SMOKE
PROGRAMME

Fourth National Bisexual Conference

BY MATT MILNE AND DOROTHY CREES

The weekend of 12/13 July saw the culmination of six month's hard work by a group of bisexual women. This was the fourth National Bisexual Conference.

The initial energy for organising the Fourth Conference came from some members of the Women's Bisexual Group during a meeting in January this year. They wanted to provide some different options to dry discussion gr ups and to emphasise bodywork and non-verbal communication during the weekend. Regular meetings were held and the location chosen.This was the Mary Ward Centre, an elegant Georgian building in Bloomsbury which is now used for all types of meetings and evening classes.

On the first evening of a the Conference, regular members were on hand to welcome visitors from outside London and to help find them accomodation.

On Saturday morning the Conference started with non-competitive games - this is becoming a tradition with the Bisexual Conferences.

Among the workshops were 'Touch Dancing', where we became aware of our bodies movements and created our own dance.'Being in Touch with ourselves', Multiple Relationships, Women-only massage - and 'On Being a Lesbian and Gay Identified Bisexual'.

Regular breaks saw us all in the excellent cafe downstairs.

A Disco had been organised at the New Merlin's Cave in King's Cross. The police had objected to a late licence; though wether this was due to the nature of the group or past misbehaviour on the part of the licensee was unclear.

Flyers were produced to advertise the Disco and information was given in the listings magazines (including Capital Gay). About 70 people attended the night including some bemused locals. A last minute visit to the police ensured that we finished at 12pm rather than 11pm.

The second day was supposed to start at 10.30 am but with the normal Sunday morning adjustment it was 12.30 before we resumed.

A little more subdued after the excesses of the previous night the workshops included Coming Out, a repeat of the very popular 'Touch Dance', women only meetings and personal space.

At the Plenary held to discuss t the Conference there was a warm friendly atmosphere. People had enjoyed the weekend. We went round the circle of participants saying what the highlight of the two days had been and what we would do to further bisexuality. Highlights included ' meeting so many other bisexuals' , the Disco, the women-only massage and the Multiple Relationship discussion.

The Weekend carried on the good work of the previous conferences. Feedback from the conference and planning for the Fifth National Bisexual Conference will take place at 8.30pm Monday October 20th at the Fallen Angel - all welcome.

Hirshfield: an oblique view

By Tom Brooks who claims NO responsibility for the misspelling of 'Hirschfeld' or 'Deviance' in the headlines !

In July I wrote to TIME OUT, the London events magazine, to complain about a pejorative reference to transvestites. It appeared in their review of 'Magnus Hirschfeld - A Portrait of a Pioneer in Sexology' (Charlotte Wolff, published by Quartet,£25). The reviewer spoke of '...a campaigner for social justice who in addition to his research on sex and some of its kinkier variants such as transvestism...'

Feeling rather annoyed at this misrepresentation of a minority, I wrote in, inviting the review person to come along to LONDON BISEXUAL GROUP. Instead of a private reply , they chose to print part of my letter as follows:
(from Time Out No.831)

Straight & narrow

Nice to see a review of 'Magnus Hirschfeld - A Portrait'(Books TO 829) but why have it written by an obvious straight like Gary Pulsifer? He mentions Hirschfeld's research ' on sex and its kinkier variants such as transvestism'.

Kinkier variants? Really? Because say, Annie Lennox dresses like a man does that send her to the wilder shores of sex ? In 1986 ?

I am bisexual and have many transvestite friends who are not kinky but brave pioneers in the battle to reduce harmful barriers between the sexes. Gary Pulsifer need only look at the Time Out Lonely Hearts column to see that cross-dressing is a significant part of our culture today.
Name and Address Withheld.
(from Time Out No.832)

Straight lines

'Name and Address Withheld' (Letters, Time Out 831) may speak on behalf of the brave new pioneers of our age (or be one him/herself) but may I point out that I never intended 'kinkier' to be a pejorative term in reference to transvestites in my review of Charlotte Wolff's excellent biography of Magnus Hirschfeld. And I trust I am neither 'obvious' nor 'straight' as your closet writer assumes.
Gary Pulsifer, W1.
(And then finally, from Time Out 833.....)

Diviance defended

Your correspondent (Time Out 831) rightly pointed out that sexual variants of all kinds are part and parcel of human nature.

As long ago as 1896 an anonymous author remarked in an essay about Oscar Wilde's homosexuality that society cannot understand itself if it does not comprehend and accept this human condition as natural. This dictum has to be extended to all sexual variants.

Although much advance has been made in changing the law against them, and even in proclaiming their equality with so-called 'normal' people, this mostly amounts to lip-service. The stigma attached to them in the minds of many people has not been extinguished.

Magnus Hirschfeld fought for the rights of sexual variants for practically the whole of his life. He was himself a homosexual, and probably a transvestite, as I have described in my book 'Magnus Hirschfeld - A Portrait of a pioneer in Sexology'.

It is my personal conviction that sexual variants, particularly homo- and bisexual people, canact as a ferment for progressive change in society because they have a much wider view of Human nature than the majority. Transvestism is a common condition as most people have enjoyed cross-dressing in childhood.

The lack of full understanding of human nature could lead not only to a static, but a regressive social order which might destroy civilization.
Charlotte Wolff,MD,FBPsS,SW10.

COMPENDIUM
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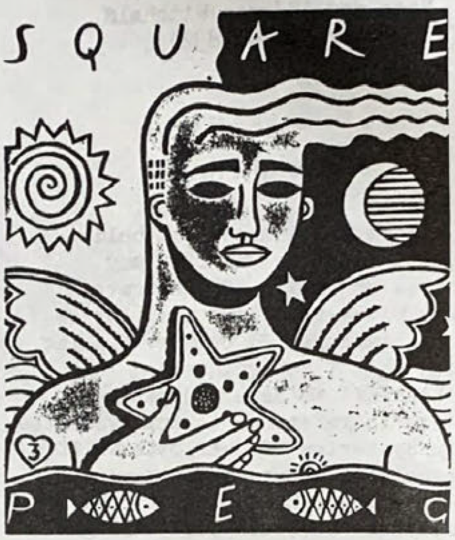
BOOKSHOP

And apropos of absolutely everything - RUPERT BROOKE - adored by men and women alike ! (photo NPG)

READING MATTERS



Magazines

GAY TIMES is a monthly 100-plus page magazine of news, interviews, reviews and features ranging over the serious and the trivial. The August issue has an interview with Charles Silverstein, co-author of THE JOY OF GAY SEX, a view of life from a Chinese American gay man, some thoughts on AIDS and the young generation of gay men and much more.

The management is trying hard to get into the shops of big newsagent chains. That would increase its position as the most widely available gay publication in the country. It's available from some newsagents at £1.00 or at £1.35 by post from GAY TIMES Subscription Membership, 283 Camden High Street, London NW1 7BX. Subscriptions cost £7.00 for six issues and £14 for twelve issues.

LESBIAN AND GAY SOCIALIST is produced by the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights. This organization was largely responsible for the acceptance of gay rights policies at last year's Labour party conference. LCLGR is currently working to get these policies into the Labour manifesto and was recently approached by Jeremy Corbyn with a view to writing a bill for presentation to Parliament after the next election.

The Summer'86 edition of LESBIAN AND GAY SOCIALIST has lots of local government, trade union and Labour Party news, features on rape and the printworkers' dispute along with reviews. Copies are 50p each plus postage and a four issue subscription costs £2.80 (£5.00 supporting and institutions), from Kirstine McDowall, 119 Riversdale Road, LONDON N5 2SU.

CAPITAL GAY.

Weekly give away newspaper. Almost everything you need to know about what's happening in London. Diary guide to what's on, contact ads, and star columnists including Chris Smith m.p.

Free in gay pubs and clubs and radical bookshops in and around London or £5.75 for 13 issues, £11.50 for 26 issues (cheques pay payable to GCODS) from GCODS,P.O. Box 44, Welwyn Garden City,AL7 2D 2DE.

SQUARE PEG.

The glossy quarterly arts magazine for 'contemporary perverts'. These are the sort of people who read City Limits and the Face and go to the Bell, Pyramid, and the Jungle.

The aforementioned City Limits praised this mix of photos,fiction,interviews, critique and hype for being one publication where 'bisexuality is not a dirty word'

I wonder whether the name refers to the old adage about round holes not being comfortable places for weirdos, or rather to the use of clothes pegs as sado-masochistic toys ? Square Peg is in the forefront of the defence of the sexual fringe. Ditch your dogma and send £5 (cheques payable to Square Peg) for the next four issues to Square Peg,BM Suare Peg,London WC1N 3XX.

OUT.

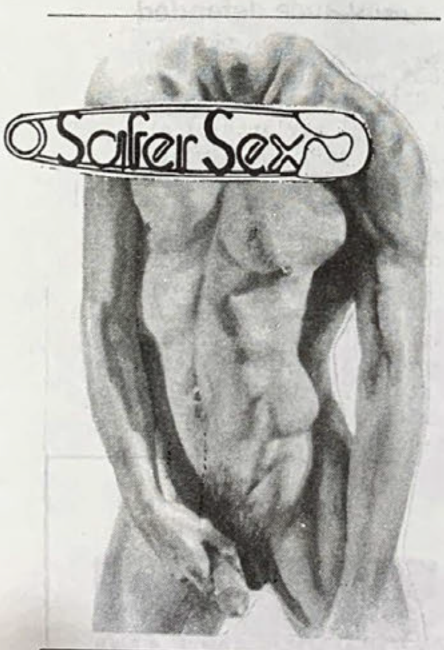
Lively,non-profit-making collectively produced 50 page mix of news, views, reviews and interviews. Everything of interest to Ireland's gay people.

It seeks to incorporate issues beyond a narrow definition of lesbian & gay politics. OUT campaigned unsuccessfully for divorce reform in Ireland. The magazine contains contact ads and a general gay guide.

One issue 80p. 6 issues £8.00 (Irish or Sterling) cheques payable to Magfield Limited from OUT magazine, P.O. Box 1449, Dublin 1, Eire.

THE LESBIAN AND GAY YOUTH MAGAZINE has been described as "probably the most radical lesbian and gay magazine ever" (BODY POLITIC, Canada's gay liberation magazine). And unconfirmed rumours hint that the Summer'86 issue has been referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions. A Tory M.P. is supposed to have objected to the magazine's positive coverage of paedophilia- a logical extension to the age of consent argument which worries many of the young readers. THE LESBIAN AND GAY YOUTH MAGAZINE gives lots of practical advice to teenagers at school, at home or out in the world. The Summer'86 has practical advice on how to harrass teachers, articles on prison, veganism, South Africa and much more. Individual issues cost 30p plus postage from Lesbian and Gay Youth Movement, BM GYM, LONDON WC1N 3XX.

(One of our correspondents has informed us that the word "bisexual"has been dropped from LGYM's list of people to support. And there are unconfirmed rumours of bisexual people being thrown out of the group. But LGYM does support "every sort of sexual deviant." Take your pick!)



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Gay Pride March - New York City

Under it's banner BISEXUAL NETWORK, a group of about 2 dozen men and women gathered at noon to march down Fifth Avenue. In front of them was an embryo organisation of macrobiotic advocates with a beautiful sign GAYS FOR GRAIN.

Behind was the Chelsea contingency, men in flamboyant costumes, some of them in drag. Threatening rain clouds lifted dramatically a as the parade began, and the after noon was sparkling with refreshing breezes blowing.

Under the bisexual banner were two couples, married and unmarried, a range of ages and a spectrum of preferences. They came from the neighbouring states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania as well as New York. The high spirits of the marchers were re-inforced all along the route. The group was enthusiastically applauded time after time by spectators lining Fifth Avenue.

Some onlookers joined the march One man, overjoyed to discover a bisexual group, shouted ecstatically and called to spectators to clap for the group. 'This is us !' he yelled with pride. As we entered the heart of the Village, where sexual diversity is acknowledged and accepted, we linked arms and sang a chant that Ben Silver composed during the course of the March :

'Where there's love in all it's splendour,
It's no matter what the gender'.

The theme of pride in our identity is a corrective to the reactionary mood of the times, typified by the President of the United States, his appointees and supporters, who are mobilized against libertarian principles and social reforms. The presence of the bisexual banner endorsed the importance of self-definition and diversity. It affirmed that human sexuality by it's nature is variable.

The participants in the march were making both a public and a personal statement that enriched their individual lives by validating their identity and celebrating it.

Bill Himelhoch.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE PRIDE MARCH.

I've got the day off from work, and I'm sitting here on Monday, trying to catch some word about our Sunday march on CBS Morning News. But of course the news and features are dominated by the upcoming Liberty Weekend (about which I've heard more than enough) , word of yet another young black athlete killed by cocaine, the suicide of an arch-conservative Southern Senator, and the shooting of a 22-year old New York City cop. Oh ; and some footage of people puckering up at a seed-spitting festival. No word about us.

As far as I'm concerned, June 28 and 29 was my Liberty Weekend, and, if the sound of a million ringing cash registers doesn't disturb me, I'll sleep through next weekend's carnival.

My maternal grandfather from Barbados came to New York after working on the building of the Panama Canal like so many other West Indians. Later, his wife and twodaghters joined him in Harlem. My mother and I were born there. My father, a carpenter, immigrated from Barbados. So, this country does represent to me a new turn in life, a new light, for my people and many more like us. But make no mistake, I'm aware of how much people like us have had to wrest from American society in order to get the benefits and respect that are supposed to be open to all. Like others, my people studied and worked hard in the face of all sorts of resistance. That's the America behind Lady Liberty, where the word 'FREE comes with an asterisk.

As a bisexual, I am, to society, a deviamt. As a feminist witch in a country that, despite claims of freedom of religion, asserts Christianity and flirts with Fundamentalism, I'm a joke if not a threat. America has offered people education, but you can certainly tell it has never guaranteed intelligence and wisdom.

What was it like to participate for the first time in the Pride March and to do so among my bisexual buddies ? Peaceful, ecstatic ! All I had to do was to look way down Fifth Avenue at the long wide band of bobbing heads, banners, and balloons to get a feeling of peace. So many gay, lesbian, bisexual, and supportive straight people together in the open, so many others not marching but out there in our city, our country. Too bad the media has chosen to ignore us this year. Our strength might give courage to others.

At 8:25AM, finally, I realise that Randall Pinkston, the black reporter on WCBS, is talking about us. 12,000 marchers, he says, but it had to be many more. His report, like the few advance stories, focuses on our conflict with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York over demonstrations in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral. He assures us that ' there was no trouble '. As if that was all the Pride march was about! Well then, let's waste no time in getting back to more Norma Kamali off-the -shoulder designs for the Statue of Liberty, Henry 'The Fonz' Winkler interviewing kids about their first trip to see the Lady. I think I'm getting sleepy...

My grandparents came over to this country so that I could turn out to be a black, bisexual, feminist, dancing witch, a writer, a and a happy woman. The proud Goddess illuminating our harbour could not be any prouder than I was on Sunday carrying the banner of The Bisexual Network.

Linda S.

(Author's note: This piece was written before we all learned - blaring headlines, videotape of gays at a San Francisco demonstration - that the Supreme Court had ruled to uphold the right of states to legislate what consenting adults may or may not do in bed. While you take a moment to recover from the slap on your face, you might think of the wonder of the Court's genius for timing and the media's unerring nose for news. Happy Fourth of July!)

Copywright 1986 by Linda S.

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AN OUTLAW PRESENTATION

Separatism and bisexuality — an open letter

It saddens me to realise this- out of all the lovely bisexual women I know from the Bisexual Group in London, not one has had a relationship with a woman in the last year- and that includes me. Most of us have slept with womyn at some point in the year but it has been the "sleeping with friends" variety of sex rather than the "sleeping with a lover" variety, if you see what I mean. (Obviously I'm doing a bit of generalising here).

We do have a good strong community of womyn-loving, womyn-identified womyn that's supportive and caring. That's got to be good and I couldn't live without it. But I also feel that it sometimes isn't enough. Right now I'm needing womyn-space and sadly the bisexual community is not the place to look for it. My dear womyn friends with whom I romped and laughed and was deeply moved by at the bisexual womyn's weekend have nearly all got a man in their day-to-day lives.

For me to join in my friends' lives involves a more than superficial contact with men on a daily basis- something I rarely wish to do. Therefore time spent with bisexual womyn in the way I feel most content and happy tends to be restricted to high days and holidays. Enjoyable and meaningful times for both of us I know, but with a certain fairy-tale unreality.

We seem to place our times with womyn in a special out of the ordinary category. We get a lot out of being womyn but the fact that our womyn-places are holiday-like and rarely includes the simple sharing of the mundane sets them apart from "real life".

Someone once said to me that she reckoned sisterhood was called that because we argue with other womyn like we argue with our own sisters. From what I've seen bisexual womyn rarely allow ourselves that freedom- perhaps in our need to prove our love and committment to womyn, letting ourselves share anger as well as joy appears a contradiction.

I do feel we are harming ourselves in this pattern. If womyn are people we always have good times with and never quarrel with, than how can we have a relationship with one? Who can maintain constant day-to-day good will? Perhaps the frequency of our love relationships with men has something to do with the fact we know it's alright to quarrel and disagree with them.

Many of us feel far more wary of becoming involved with womyn than men as the thought of hurting a womyn is extremely painful to us. That care and respect is beautiful but in not taking positive action to make relationships with womyn more of a possibility we do ourselves a disservice. There are so many barriers in our society against womyn loving womyn that allowing our respect for womyn to put them out of reach on a pedestal is a tragedy.

I'm very glad that as a bisexual womyn's community we're still growing and I'm really proud of the growing and travelling we've already done together. In the future - both for me and our community - I'm looking forward to us making more space for ourselves so that we can share both our connections and separeteness. I believe we can find the way to have daily lives that include space for ourselves and our sistersand, if we choose it, men.

I look forward to that time and to our sharing of the changes on the way.

Ali Raven

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bisexual women's weekend

At the end of May the first national gathering of bisexual women took place in the form of a weekend at the women's holiday house in Horton, Yorkshire.

From Edinburgh, Glasgow, London and Yorkshire a dozen women and one child came together to share our experiences through discussion, walks, massage, drama, singing and food.

For many of us this was the first time we'd had the opportunity to talk freely about our sexuality. For all of us the weekend was so good that we wanted to spend more time together.

We will be going to Horton again the weekend of the 18th of October. Other women are welcome to join us. There are facilities for children and there is some access for wheelchairs (S.A.D. code available) and a bedroom free from animal hairs/ feathers.

For more information write to:
Bisexual Women's Weekend, P.H.7,
340 West Princes Street, Kelvinbridge, Glasgow 3.

Marital Aids

With his new play 'Marital Aids' Jack Bradley has written a tense and moving drama. A highly relevant contribution to the current discussion on AIDS and growing interest in bisexuality, its emotional impact may well ease, or prise, a few more bisexuals into the open. Certainly any already there should see it.

Jack, a joint winner of the Observer/Royal Court Young Writers' Competition, was commissioned by Binary Theatre Company to write this play for the Edinburgh Festival. His dialogue vividly captures the feeling of betrayal, the difficulties of communications and the resilience of leve in a situation where a bisexual man discovers his male lover is AIDS antibody positive and as a result tells his wife of his bisexuality.

In the London preview Penny Mc Hale as Judy and Ian Hanham as Ryk gave such an agonisingly real realistic portrayal of both old and new aspects of the bisexual's dilemma, it made my heart ache.

Short on personal experience in this area Jack Bradley consulted with members of the London Bisexual Group and their partners whilst writing this play.

It is at Edinburgh from 11-23 August, after which it is hoped another run will be arranged in London. A special production followed by discussion is planned at a metting of LBG later in the year.

Network Manifesto

The radical lesbian and gay identified bisexual network

Bisexuals are people who are oriented towards emotional and sexual relationships with people of both sexes.

We strongly support sexual freedom: the freedom of all people, regardless of age, sex or disability, to explore and define openly their own sexual styles, homosexual, bisexual, celibate, heterosexual, monogamous, promiscuous, and non-monogamous, with others who share the same freedom and consent. This includes the right to refuse sexual contact with anyone for any reason, and the rights of women and men to take responsibility for and to control their own fertility.

We believe that the prevailing heterosexist ideas abour sexuality have created restrictive and damaging categories into which the diversity of human sexuality does not fit. WE believe that bisexuality challenges the order and origins of these categories. However, whilst this sexual oppression exists, it is vital for bisexuals, lesbians and gay men to organise politically around their self-defined sexual identities. So it is important for bisexuals to be sexually active within the lesbian and gay movement, working towards the reconstruction of sexuality without oppression.

We believe that sexual oppression is both a result of and an integral part of our patriarcnal and capitalist society, therefore we recognise the links between the oppression of people because of their sex, sexuality, gender identity, disability, race, age, class, nationality, or religion.

Our aims are:

1. To give bisexuals a strong, valid identity within the lesbian and gay liberation movement in particular and society in general. In order to achieve this we must work as bisexuals within the movement both autonomously and collectively.
2. The elimination of sexism, heterosexism and male-defined sexuality and all other forms of oppression.
3. To remove the power which adults have over children and young people so that children and young people have the right to define their own lives and sexuality. Included in this is the provision of an education which adequately reflects the diversity of human sexuality.
4. To create a positive image of differing sexualities and sexual attitudes within the media. This nesessitates representative and participatory community control of the media. Also to create media and a culture of our own.
5. Actively to work for the self organisation of bisexual people and to form alliances with other progressive forces, nationally and internationally.

If you agree with this and would like to go on the contact list of "The Network", please send 50 words about yourself, and an s.a.e. to "The Network", The Basement, 69 Elm Grove, Brighton BN2 3 ET.

Anthropology, gender & sexuality

If you look at recent issues of Bi-monthly, you may notice that articles on theory and research are often written from a psychological perspective. For anthropologists, this is a significant fact about the way our culture construes sexuality. Through trying to understand sexuality and gender in other societies, in terms of those societies' values, anthropology might reflexively give us a better reading of our own 'problems'.

Current theory in anthropology regards gender and sexuality as being socially constructed, i.e. an anatomical difference between male and female is taken as a universal given, but the cultural values appended (ideologies of what is natural to each sex; who may sleep with whom; which activities are appropriately male or female etc.) are extremely variable. A brief scan of the ethnographic literature will illustrate the point.

Papua New Guinea is a stock pot of what to Western thought may appear as sexual peculiarities: books abound with such titles as "The Island of Menstruating Men". A group of practices labelled 'ritualized homosexuality' has excited much attention. To generalize, boys at around the age of ten were separated from their mothers and went to live in exclusively male houses, where initiation to manhood could include repeated oral and anal insemination by older men. Early missionaries unsurprisingly saw such behaviour as unmentionably evil, and did much to stamp it out. Recently, anthropologists have interpreted the behaviour as reflecting a culture in which maleness and femaleness are strongly segregated, and gender is determined more by bodily fluids than by anatomy. The process of becoming a woman is naturally marked by the onset of menstruation. Manhood is less easily discriminated, so, as semen is the embodiment of masculinity, and hence power, the boy's passage to manhood is reinforced by the donation of semen. In one writer's words, 'Sex in New Guinea seems to be conceived of less in terms of fun than as a means of getting down to the serious business of semen allocation.' Our categories of active and passive, dominant and submissive become inappropriate: homosexual insemination is masculinizing.

Among some North American Indian tribes a species of gender-crossing has stimulated similar reinterpretation. When first noted, the phenomenon was termed 'berdache' (a French term for male prostitute): some adult males adopted the clothing and behaviour of women and had sexual relations with other men. Now, it is thought that productive labour (rather than anatomy or body fluids) was the culturally specific determinant of gender. Persons showing a preference for the activities of the opposite sex in childhood were allowed to cross the divide, and conceptually sexual intercourse between a male berdache and another male was heterosexual. It is notable that such geder crossing applied to both sexes, but could be less complete for women: as in most societies, the power structure is male dominated (the male berdache was frequently described by Indians as being better at women's tasks than women!)

It seems then that there are, or have been a number of societies in which subjective experience of homo- and heterosexual relations (in our terms) is the rule. The 'problem' of erotic bisexuality could not there be formulated. Which suggests that we should consider how homosexuality and bisexuality have become problems in this society, and what has made them the legitimate subject matter of psychology, rather than some other branch of knowledge. Why are we peculiarly obsessed with defining ourselves in terms of what we do with our genitals? Placing sexuality in the wider context of society is what Foucault does in his "The History of Sexuality", which I recommend to anyone who wants to look in greater depth at the subject.

PHILIP GATTER

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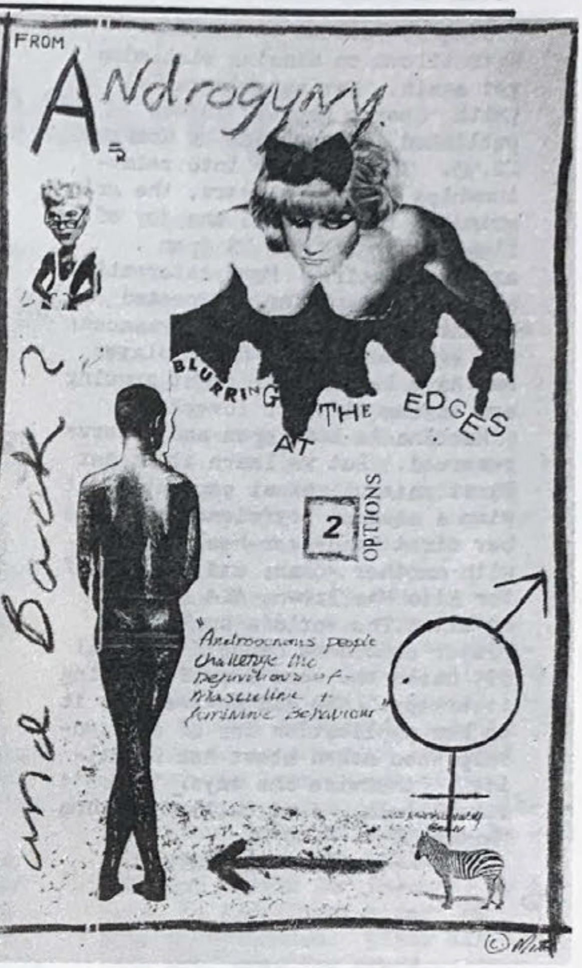
FROM
Androgyny
BLURRING AT THE EDGES
and back?
2 OPTIONS
"Androgynous people challenge the definitions of masculine + feminine behaviour"
©Mi

Last issue I discussed the concept of psychological and physical androgyny and how they have great relevance to the subject of human sexuality. I showed.how psychologically androgynous people challenged the the definitions of masculine and feminine behaviour . I now go on to predict the consequence of a continuation of acceptance and what this means for the future, especially the gay and straight definitions.

Understanding of the phenomenon of homosexuality 30 years ago was based on classical biological models, i.e. the feminised male. It was felt that homosexual men were suffering from a hormone problem; they had too many female hormones. A visit to Greenwich Village New York would have confirmed this belief, with a very visible gay queen image parading the streets. Being very visible, they were easy targets for attack.

Since then gay men have systematically divorced themselves from the femme stereotype. Today if you confront gay men with the notion that they still carry some of that stereotype, they will in many cases say that'gay men are real men now'. So real men are homosexual? Where does this leave the heterosexual man?

In my opinion this leaves the straight male no option but to become more feminine. So ironically we have a situation where gays have shifted the straight male image towards androgyny.

Using this idea for women, we can expect the future image for gay women will undergo a similar transformation i.e. the 'feminine lesbian'. An underlying mechanism seems to be going on whereby both women and men of gay and straight persuasions are selecting certain identities.

It seems to me that what we are seeing is the gradual acceptance of the 'same sex image'. This means that partners in relationships are to tending to express their similarities rather than their differences. The androgynous image, which makes male close to female, is therefore heterosexually motivated.

All of these generalisations of image and sexuality are not of course a rule for individual preferences of behaviour. Also, the feminine and masculine definitions are prone to five-yearly adjustments.

The 'same sex image' has already enjoyed acceptnace within the social framework of subcultures e.g. hippy, skinhead, punk, but has been thought a secondary feature of that culture. Perhaps it is a primary reason for joining such groups? According to a friend, "Like all these subcultultures the same sex image will have a limited life span. Society gets bored wit one set of ground rules and moves on to new ones". I strongly disagree with this cynical belief. Androgyny is a concept central to sexual equality; these will be fixed ground rules. Women's liberation will not be forgotten and men (and women) must react to this.

Looking ahead to the advantages of an Androgynous Society

Straight Society

Better understanding between the sexes, less mental and sexual mystificatinn in relationships.

Equal education, power sharing in work and at home.

Lesbians and Gays

Greater acceptance by straight society since they now realise the same sex component in their relationships.

My friend is not so sure about the utopian ideals above. "The androgynous society would take away all the excitement, it sounds so boring, people like a level of tension and excitement in relationships'. The answer to this common criticism is that sexual role playing would still happen, probably like it does in gay society at present. In this situation role playing is seen for all it is, a game, and not a requirement of your gender. Male gender does not only mean aggression, female does not only mean submission etc.. It will give people greater flexibility in experience, they will come to a greater understanding of how the other feels. They will also be able to say ' stop it please, I've had enough' without offending their partner.

It seems to me that gay society has a lot of the elements of my future society, except that my society is more tolerant and suits bisexuals better. As it stands, there is nothing worse than a male clone chatting up a butch lesbian, or a lesbian approaching a transvestite by mistake. Under the ground rules of lesbian or gay society, these situations breed intolerance.

In my society there would be no problem. We have one more step to go before we have complete sexual tolerance; the androgynous society.

London's Gay Community Bookshop
Gay's The Word
66 Marchmont Street WC1.,
Telephone: 01-278 7654

READING MATTERS

Congratulations to Martina Navratilova on winning Wimbledon yet again. Her autobiography (with George Vecsey) is now published in paperback by Grafton, £2.95. The insights into relationships between players, the grin grind of the circuit, the joy of finally winning the US Open are fascinating. More interesting are the reasons for unexpected defeats or below par performances; who ever considers that a player may have been up all night arguing and crying with her lover?

Martina is both open and reserve reserved. But we learn about her first painful sexual encounter wit with a student boyfriend in Prague her first head-over-heels affair with another woman; and her love f for Rita Mae Brown, the lesbian novelist.The world's number one player considers herself bisexual but hates the word itself thinking it creepy. She did however use it on her application for US citizenship when asked about her sexuality. Otherwise she says; 'I don't like labels. Just call me Martina Martina.'

DAVID SMITH.

Mansfield

Katherine Mansfield is the subject of analysis in a book in the series Key Women Writers (Harvester £5.95). Kate Fulbrook looks at the feminist elements in this bisexual author's works withc without ignoring their ability to transcend the boundaries of gender.

Purposes of love

Ambiguous sexuality is the subject of Mary Renault's first novel originally published in 1939. PURPOSES OF LOVE, now reissued by Penguin, £2.95,tells the story of hospital nurse Vivian who experiments with lesbianism before embarking on a whirlwind love affair with the previously homosexual Nic.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

AIDS
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Perverts in paradise

Two noteworthy tomes from Gay Men's Press.PERVERTS IN PARADISE (translated by Martin Foreman,£5.9 £5.95) is Joao S. Trevisan's view of five centuries of Brazil where homosexuality has found more places to flourish than anywhere e else in the world. And due in October HETEROSEXUALITY is a mix of fiction, verse,humour, cartoons personal experience and social psychology from various contributors on a subject that has vexed lesbians and gay men since time immemorial.

Sex, power & pleasure

SEX,POWER AND PLEASURE (The Wome Women's Press of Canada,distributed by Turnaround,£4.95) is a guide to the state of the debate about women's sexuality by Canadian feminist and teacher of women's studies Mariana Valverde. One of her many pleas is that lesbians should be less wary of bisexual women.(To be reviewed).

MacInnes

The ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS bandwagon rolls on with yet another book fro from bisexual writer Colin MacInnes.ENGLAND,HALF ENGLISH (Hogarth,£3.95) is a collection of journalistic writing from the late 50s and early 60s. Essential reading for the cafe crowd.

Bloody Sunday

GAY'S THE WORD BOOKSHOP has imported the script of the 70s classic bisexual film SUNDAY, BLOODY SUNDAY about a triangular affair between Glenda Jackson, Murray Head and Peter Finch. The book, published by Dodd,Mead & Co of the USA, features a foreword by the author Penelope Gilliat and costs £8.50.

DAVID SMITH

SIGMA DAY

A day of workshops on:

pros and cons of separateness

sharing partners-mentally & physically

self understanding-TA as a tool

getting help through counselling

On 27th September from 10a.m. to 5p.m. at St. Pancras Church House, London, NW1 (near Euston station). Cost: £7.50 each, inclusive of tea and coffee (bring own lunch).

Contacts: Penny Edwards, Ray Edwards, Beth Webster.
B.M. SIGMA, London,
WC1N 3XX.

Men and friendship

J. RICHARDS UNEARTHS A PERSONAL INVESTIGATION OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MAN IN THE WEST. AND WE SO OFTEN FAIL TO COMMUNICATE.

'Men and Friendship' by Stuart Miller,Gateway Books,1983.

Fortunately and unfortunately this is a book about men,for men. Fortunately, because the author is exploring an aspect of men which seems to have become taboo. Unfortunately, because it is some something of an indictment of the male gender - in the West at least.

The author writes from the standpoint of a heterosexual American male undergoing a 'mid-life crisis' (his words) and a divorce. During the period in which the book was researched he attempted to obtain a circle of male friends such as he had not had since childhood. He also remarried. Yet rather than being a at all self-indulgent, it is both a well-researched document as well as being based on extensive classical and modern writing on friendship, yet 'warmer and less systematic, more inward and intimate'.To quote:

...The books leave out the emotional realities. The vast majority of my interviews were very much the same. Men will often glow when one brings up the topic of friendship...but in general they won't really show or tell you much about what friendship means to them...

Miller attempts to explain the reasons why friendship is such a difficult 'problem' between men - why men must emphasise their 'armour'. He spends time on social and historical issues covering the Church and the rise of capitalism, bfore moving on to several chapters of 'case studies - some involving the experiences of men he interviewed, others documenting his own experiences over the time he was writing.

In the latter case, he would either look up an old friend in a an attempt to (re?)gain some intimacy, or else he would follow up a new acquaintance from a similar standpoint.

But business and normal 'mens interests' continue to crop up an and cloud matters - as in this in instance when he finds a friend some work:

...We discussed the details just as we had previously discussed other matters of business. Last night however I was after something simpler between us. It is time to get beyond the parade of our past and future achievements, time for something more personal...

Towards the end of the book are two chapters which introduce the themes of 'The Fear of Homosexuality' and 'Women's Lessons'. Throughout the writing, Miller had been repeatedly misinterpreted as to his aim by other men, 'You mean you are going to write about homosexuality? That's what everybody will think at least. Could be dangerous for you'. He explores the current (but apparently recent) idea that a man satisfies all his friendship as well as sexual needs with a woman.

One of his greatest struggles seems to be against his personal attitude to possibly being seen as gay. He knows it should not matter - but to me he never fully resolves it Writing as a gay man I do not find as many difficulties surrounding the links between friendship and sexuality - although the problem of how to find true friendship is there for all who recognise the rarity and true value of it.

The chapter on 'Women's Lessons' documents some conversations Miller had with women and - not surprisingly - he finds that women seem far more able to be intimate with each other than do men - aside from sexuality. There are even laughs in this chapter - it is refreshing!

The conclusion to the book is hopeful. Miller seems to prescribe the would-be male friend some 'homework'. I read that he is telling us not to be too afraid:

...The acts of friendship we need are inner acts...Inwardly accepting the necessity to give friendship one's closest attention and recalling the social obstacles to friendship...Being willing to acknowledge the hurt of your own loneliness...Being shameless in thinking, then talking, about male friendship...Being persistent...be willing to ask your friend for favours, to take, to sacrifice, a part of your independence. After all such art, pray for grace...

I would urge all men who want more out of their friendships - whatever their sexuality - to read this book. It currently costs £4.95, but I found it by accident in my local (Westminster) library.

J. RICHARDS.

Hirschfeld with Karl Giese in exile after the Nazi Takeover in Germany - taken from 'Magnus Hirschfeld - Portrait of a Pioneer in Sexology' (Quartet £25) a new biography by Charlotte Wolff MD,

STAGE & SCREEN

La cage aux folles III

I think this may be the end of the road for the CAGE AUX FOLLES bandwagon. First there was Jean Poiret's play, then the hilarious and poignant film, which won awards in both Italy and France.

A film sequel (La Cage Aux Folles II) followed. Then Harvey Fierstein turned the original play into a Broadway Musical smash hit. The show has come to London's Palladium where George Hearn is jerking tears when his heart-breaking drag queen affirmatively renders the classic ' I am what I am'.

But 'La Cage Aux Folles III, The Marriage', is a sorry spectacle. Ugo Tognazzi and Michel Serrault have recreated their roles as Renato, the owner, and Albin, the top drag star, of St. Tropez's La Cage Aux Folles nightclub. Albin has just inherited a vast fortune - but only if he gets married and has a child within 18 months.

Completely out of the question thinks Albin. But Renato, worried about the club's debts, has other ideas. He pretends to have gone straight - after a knock on the head - in order to persuade Albin that they need money for drastic medical treatment. When that ploy fails, he tries to arrange amarriage for Albin.

The pignancy of the first film stemmed from the threat to Albin's existence as a wonderfully unselfconscious transvestite from his son. And the humour came not from the absurdity of the character, but of the situation.

But in Cages Aux Folles III, Albin's identity is threatened by his lover, whose ploys strike at his fundamental sexual identity. Thus Albin's very essence becomes the butt of the humour and it just does not work.

There are occassional laughs, which escape through the holes in the net being wrapped around Albin. But on the whole he just squeaks and squawks and minces and screams along the way to his one chance to wear a wedding dress.

On Monday September 1st at 11pm Channel Four will start an eight week season of lesbian and gay films including BEFORE STONEWALL, THE TIMES OF HARVEY MILK, MAEDCHEN IN UNIFORM, and Kenneth Anger's SCORPIO RISING.

It s a pity this will mean the postponement of the excellent series SIX OF HEARTS, one programme of which includes an interview with a bisexual man and his wife. Channel Four does not want to have too much gay programming all at once!

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At last the excellent film DESERT HEARTS has been released. It s an hilarious weepie, beautifully shot in the Nevada desert with a clutch of strong women full of wisdom about the joy and pain of love.

Vivien, at 35 a respected literary Professor, leaves her husband and goes to Reno for a quick divorce. There she meets Gay, casino cashier, artist and maniac driver, who is looking for someone that matters....

Backed by classic Country & Western, blues and rock'n roll songs, the film grabs you by the throat and makes you feel every emotion played out onthe screen. It s the most open and positive gay love story I've ever seen.

Gays in film

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Gay film-maker Derek Jarman has been shortlisted for the prestigious Turner Prize, (£10,000), the annual award to the person though thought to have made the greatest contribution to British art. Also in line for the prize are gay artists Gilbert & George

While Jarman's CARAVAGGIO continues to do well , he is writing the script for an adaptation of Elizabethan playwright Christopher Marlowe's EDWARD II. This was the King who was murdered for having a male lover. Jarman hopes to start shooting the £2 m. project in the Spring.

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Bette Midler and Shelley Long have been working together on a 'female buddie movie'. OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE is set in New York.

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George Segal is starring in a forthcoming gay comedy, WHO'S IN THE CLOSET? Wonder what that will be like?

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A film to look forward to is THE BERLIN AFFAIR. Set in Berlin in 1938, it's the story of an erotic love triangle involving the daughter of a Japanese diplomat, her German lover and the lover's husband. The film is directed by Liliana Cavani and based on Junochiro Tanizaki's novel THE BUDDHIST CROSS.

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We should also soon be seeing BUDDIES, the first general release film about AIDS. It's the story of a volunteer worker who befriends and supports a gay man who is dying of the syndrome.

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Finally, Stephen Frears, director of MY BEAUTIFUL LAUNDRETTE, is lined up to make a film of PRICK UP YOUR EARS. Alan Bennett has written the screenplay from John Lahr's excellent biography of Joe Orton. But there are problems. Comedian, raconteur and quiz-show star Kenneth Williams has refused to be mentioned or portrayed in the film, even though he had quite a hand in Orton's career.

Stage and Screen was written and compiled by David Smith.

PYRAMIDICAL SYNERGIES

SPEND THE SUMMER WORKING AT AN ALTERNATIVE NATURIST CENTRE IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE

English family building an alternative/naturist healing centre based on the philosophy of triangulation and pyramidical synergies Can offer an interesting summer of discussion, healing sessions and research. In return we need help with some hard work, gardening , building, painting, plastering, help in the house and with the kids. We are as broke as you are, so it's only wine and fag money (100 Fr per week). If the car works, and you work well, there could be trips to the nearest skinny-dip beach on the Med.

We are looking for adventurous, ebullient, bubbly and vivacious personalities. Especially those interested in a future of triangular families, the healing power and potential of female bisensuality and can add constructively to discussional input on such subjects.

You will have to hitch-hike-bike or take first class Air France to Toulouse airport if you're in the money. Bring sleeping bags for you will be camping in our barn. We'll feed you sumptuously (diet semi-vegetarian).

Possibility for a long-term proposition for enthusiastic young woman interested in staying on to learn alternative therapies and help run the centre on an apprentice/student/au pair basis.

All apply with long letter and photo to:
Michael and Lesley Ann Cort,
Nalviac, 11320 Labastide D'Anjou,
Aude, France.

THE CENTRE FOR SYNERGETIC COMMUNICATIONS ALTERNATIVE NATURIST HOLIDAYS FOR STUDENTS JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER.

If you are interested in pyramidal synergy, triangulated families, troilism, therapies, feminine bisexuality and bisensuality, healing power and alternative communities - then a camping holiday at our naturist centre is for you. Join in discussions, meet similar people, contribute some work (2 hours per day) to building the centre. One full meal is provided per day plus continental breakfast. Bring your tent or use our barn. Nearest airport Toulouse. Station Castelnaudry.

Limited space. Price £54.00 per week £15.00 deposit with booking or details from: Nalviac, 11320 Labastide D'Anjou, Aude, France.

LETTERS

From the P.R. Manager,
Prestel,
Telephone House,
Temple Avenue,
London EC4 OHL.

Dear Editor,

Rachel O'Connor's feature on gays on Prestel (June -July 86) states that 'Gays are taking over Prestel...this has become a big embarassment to British Telecom, and plans are being formulated to isolate gays on prestel'.

This is not quite the case. Yes, on Prestel's Micronet 800 service gays will have their section on a closed user group, and membership of this will be via a once-and -for-all fee of £10. This should not be seen as isolating gays. Prestel decided, with Telemap Ltd,providers of the Micronet 800 service, that gays should have their own section on Micronet to avoid abuses of the gay chatline facility. Sadly,one or two messages on this service had content which was less than acceptable.It is possible,though we have no evidence,that they might have been put there by non-gays.Whatever, we decided that gays should have their own closed user group, or club if you prefer on Micronet, free of any provocative,or similar, abuses. Our feedback to date indicates that many gays on Micronet have welcomed this development, and have joined 'their' club.

Further evidence that we have not isolated gays is actually provided by Rachel O'Connor herself! She refers to 3 services for gays that are on openaccess on Prestel.

Additionally, Prestel has a personal column on open access called Simpatico. Gays often advertise on Simpatico, and are very welcome. Simpatico is free, and a new set of advertisements appears every Wednesday. All that we ask is that the content of the free listing is 'legal, decent and honest'.The service has an Editor whose job it is to ensure that the content is publishable

Yours faithfully,

Mike Abbott.

Reply from Rachel O'Connor:

Good luck to the Gay Closed User Group. My reservation is that I know a lot of people who are reluctant to ' come out to a computer', who hate the idea of having their name and address stored in some data base.

Hopefully the CUG will not be too male dominated or forget bisexual people! It would be nice to see us represented ! Maybe we need our own group on Prestel, what do you say Ed...?

Ordination of women.

A cartoon in the Guardian (July 9) shows a woman addressing a bishop: 'I wouldn't want to be ordained, I couldn't stand all that dressing up'.

The comment is not inappropriate for one familiar with the Anglo-Catholic clergy. In my experience many of them are gay or bisexual, and in the main not openly so. Young men in tight jeans are invited to sherry at the vicarage, but heaven forbid that others in the congregation discover the real motivation for the hospitality.

Beneath the nomintern silliness (as A.N.Wilson calls it) of these gay coteries, there is a strong current of misogyny: we don't want any fish in our pond. What offends me is that this thread of opposition to the ordination of women is not admitted to. To do so would mean honesty about sexuality, directly contradicting pulpit proclamations.

Philip Gatter, Islington.

We welcome your comments on all aspects of bisexuality and other topics. Please keep your letters short and address them to The Editors BI-MONTHLY 1 Lycett House London SW2 4UZ enclosing your telephone number (not for publication).

Advertisement

London Bisexual Group

Expand Your Horizons.

The London Bisexual Group meets every Monday at a friendly and pleasant pub in Islington. Here you can enjoy a delicious small meal or sample their choice of local beers before joining us for one of our informal get-togethers or a lively discussion. Hundreds of men and women have done so in the last few years. Why don't you come and make some new friends. You'll be surprised.

Our programme of events for Autumn:

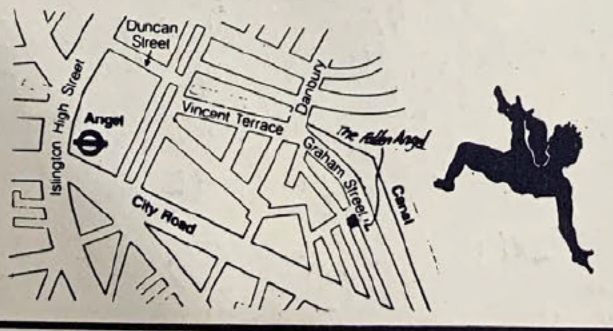
SEPTEMBER
- 1 5th Birthday Party. All Welcome.
- 8 Lonely Hearts and Personal Ads - Tom Brooks.
- 15 Hepatitis B - Medical Spokesperson from 'Counsellor'.
- 22 Perverts on Prestel - Rachel O'Connor.
- 29 Attitudes Towards Art - Sarah Mcgee.

OCTOBER
- 6 Social - All Welcome.
- 13 Safe Sex and Women - Ms. Leslie Glover - Senior Health Adviser - Sexually Transmitted Diseases.
- 20 Conference Feedback and Planning.
- 27 Women Only - Women's Sexuality - Dorothy Crees.
- 27 Men's Social - Downstairs.

NOVEMBER
- 3 What is the Point of Sexual Politics? Philip Catter.
- 10 Social - All Welcome.
- 17 Social and Political Meaning of Aids - Michael Brown.
- 24 Gays in Westminster - Ron

DECEMBER
- 1 Rebirthing - Guy Chapman.
- 8 Men Only - Men Only.
- 8 Women's Social - Downstairs.

THE FALLEN ANGEL
HOW TO GET THERE



Meetings start at 8.30pm. For further information write to BM BI London WC1N 3XX.

You never know until you've tried it. LBG.

TAKING ISSUE

Teach the children well

Until recently I believed that society's attitude to homosexuality was moving, albeit painfully slowly, in a progressive direction towards a time when homosexuality and even bisexuality would be discussed in the classroom as a matter of course, but recent events indicate such confidence is not well founded.

In London, Tory MP Sir Hugh Rossi (Hornsey & Wood Green), reacting to labour controlled Haringey Council's plans to promote positive images of lesbians and gay men in schools, has announced his intention to ensure that the current Education Bill excludes homosexuality from sex education. This bears out our worst fears concerning how this Bill's stipulation that sex education must have "due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life" is likely to be interpreted.

In Norwich, Judge John Blofeld, QC recently told the jury in a case where a man faced charges of 'gross indecency' with an 'underage' man of 18: "the law enacts that young men have to be protected until the age 21 so it gives them more time to decide whether they wish to be homosexuals or not".

How can they decide "whether they wish to be homosexuals or not" if they are prevented by law both from talking about it openly in the classroom and from trying it out for themselves. Surrounded by prejudice, misinformation and negative images and with the bisexual option omitted how can they decide anything? Instead most of them will be forced into a 5 to 15 year sentence of finding out the hard way.

Who says homosexuality is not a family matter? Families are permeated through and through with homosexuality. I know because I speak to bisexuals in them and read letters from them every day of the week. We, the lesbian, gay and bisexual children, did not materialize out of thin air, and we are everywhere, though mostly still invisible. If you think about the statistics in a visual way, there must be at least one of us in every third home in your street. Let us not forget - that's millions and millions of us! We would like our families to be able to share our homosexual pride, joy and sorrow - how rare this is though. Giving families the confidence and strength to love and rejoice in their bisexual and homosexual elements should be what 'family values' are all about.

What we in Western society, particularly women, expect from marriage and relationships bears no relationship to the experience of marriage and relationships between women and men in earlier periods of history, yet we still allow our children to be pressurised into following these traditions, pressurised to conform heterosexually, and when it doesn't work we sit back and watch their distress and suffering, exacerbated by our lack of honesty.

We say we'll tell them when they're old enough to understand. But they will understand as soon as we choose to tell them. They are exposed daily to the tabloids' salacious stories prising gay stars out of the closet and the treachery of gay husbands and lesbian wives. I insist on my children's right to have these issues balanced by calm and informed discussion in school about the realities of lesbian and gay experience and the right of lesbian and gay teachers to be open about their sexuality. In the present climate this right must be protected by law and schools should be obliged to employ a proportion of openly lesbian, gay and bisexual teachers..

David Burkle.